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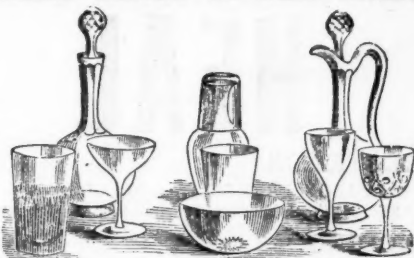
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## LADY LOVELACE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JUDITH WYNNE," ETC., ETC.

### CHAPTER I.

"I DON'T believe you have heard one word I have said," exclaimed Edie Fairfax from her perch among the low branches of a spreading walnut-tree. Then with a sudden petulant upward movement, she seized a bough that gracefully arched itself over her head, and sent a whole shower of the over-ripe nuts on to the brown, withered grass beneath, where, book in hand, half lay, half reclined, the lithe, long figure of Philip Wickham, nephew to Miss Edie's father's oldest friend and nearest neighbour, Colonel Wickham, of Wickham Place. Her betrothed lover also, ever since, as a small maiden of twelve years, she had looked up in his face and said: "Phil, I love you better than anyone in the whole world; when we grow up we'll keep house together, so mind you don't marry anybody else."

Phil looked up lazily for a moment as the nuts came rattling about his ears.

"How now, Edie; what's up?" he said calmly. (One might almost have declared he was used to such vehement expostulations.) Then his eyes wandered back to his open book once more.

Edie grew more and more indignant.

She was a small, slight girl, of the brown-eyed, brown-haired English type, with a complexion pure and pale, and a colour that came and went with every passing mood. Her features were small and regular, her lips daintily curved, her nose straight. At first sight one was apt to think that somehow Nature had made a mistake in fitting such a nose on a face that seemed emphatically to demand one of the artless retroussé type; as one knew her better, however, one would feel bound to

admit that Nature was correct as usual, and the nose as right as could be—just what one would expect a person of Edie's temperament to own to; in fact, the face taken as a whole (nose included), expressed the girl in all her moods to perfection. It was a face that before anything else seemed to say, "I am a happy young person, and I have been all my life a spoilt, petted, and happy young person. I am, perhaps, a little disposed to be imperious at times, and, not a doubt, I can't stand being thwarted or denied my own way."

At the moment, however, when she rattled the ripe walnuts about Phil Wickham's head, it is possible that her face expressed more imperiousness than happiness, for the pretty little lips were straightening out of their usual curves, dimples had disappeared, and there was a very determined ring in her voice as she said:

"Phil, once for all, will you put away that horrid book, and listen to me with both your ears?"

"My dear Edie, I have been listening to you ever since I came out this morning with my book and pipe at eleven o'clock; and now it's nearly one—that's close upon two hours of listening," was Phil's rejoinder in the same mild, lazy tone as before.

"That's close upon two hours of reading, you mean? How anyone in his senses could waste all that time over a stupid novel is more than I can understand. I thought you men were above such frivolous nonsense as reading novels, I really did."

"My dear Edie, we only occasionally look into them to see what the women spend so much time over. Also, I would like to remind you that the book I have in my hand at the present moment cannot



be characterised either as stupid or frivolous; it is written by one of the cleverest men of the day, and is called——"

"I don't in the least want to know what it is called. It is written by a man, and that is quite enough for me; I never take more than five minutes, at the outside, over a man's book"—here the short upper-lip curled itself into the prettiest little attempt at a sneer of which it was capable—"such creatures as they turn out for heroes, and one is to take their word for it, that they are drawn from life!" Here a visible shudder, which sent half-a-dozen or so of the driest of the walnut-leaves on to Phil's pages. "Well, I only hope a good providence won't send any such heroes limping across my path. Why, we'd die old maids a thousand times over rather than put up with such a horror as the one you're reading about there. I've forgotten his name—Heth, Hether, or Hethering something or other. A man who'd preach to you morning, noon, or night, no matter what you might do. He'd preach to you if you laughed, and he'd preach to you if you cried, and he'd preach to you if you didn't do either!"

Here, pausing for breath, she nodded somewhat viciously at the book, which Phil had now closed, and was leaning his elbows upon, while he looked up in her face, waiting for her tirade of criticism to cease.

When at length it came to an end, he clapped his hands vigorously, crying, "Well done—well done——"

But Edie interrupted him:

"Be quiet, Phil; you know how I hate to be applauded in that ironical way," she began petulantly.

"My dear Edie," retorted the young man, "you should have let me finish. I was applauding myself, not you. I was going to say, 'Well done, Phil, old fellow; you are a capital listener, after all.'"

Edie laughed outright. In this young person's April-like temperament, smiles and petulance frequently trod upon each other's heels, or even at times came hand-in-hand.

"You do well to applaud yourself for your listening powers—no one else would do it for you. Not I, at any rate, for you have not heard one word I have been saying, as I have already told you a hundred times over."

"My dear Edie, as I have already told you, not a hundred times, but once only, I have heard not only every half-syllable you have uttered since I have been lying here on the grass at your feet, but I have heard

more than your words. Don't lift your eyebrows at me in that fashion. I distinctly heard two tremendously heavy sighs when you made the announcement that Lady Lovelace was coming to stay with you for a few months—for the winter most probably."

"I object to having my sighs catalogued in that businesslike fashion. As though they concerned anybody but myself! I object also to having my cousin called by any but her proper name, Ellinor Yorke."

"But, Edie, she is a Lovelace—at the commencement of her career. Nothing will ever unmake her."

"Now, Phil, who and what was Lovelace? The man himself, I mean? I am always meeting with allusions to him in books, but I have never come across the man himself, although I get through piles of novels every year! Who was he? What did he do?"

"Oh, nothing very much; he used to go about the world breaking people's hearts—that was all."

"Well, I see nothing wonderful in that; as if anybody couldn't do that, if they tried!" this said with a scornful emphasis.

"And crushing people's souls—women's, that is," continued Phil.

"Ah, that's another thing! Anybody couldn't do that. But, Phil," this added after a moment's reflection, "it would have been grand to have turned the tables on him!"

Phil looked up suddenly in her face.

"You couldn't do such a thing, Edie!" he said sharply, one might almost have said nervously.

There came no answer from Edie. She was slowly pulling the big leaves, damp and limp from October night dews, from the bough on which she sat, dropping them one by one on the ground at her feet. She seemed all engrossed in her task.

Phil, with something of a canine stretch and shake, got up from his recumbent posture. He was a fine, stalwart young fellow, of about five or six and twenty, with a frank, honest-looking face, bright blue eyes, a heavy thickness of fair curling hair. The absence of beard or whisker on his face possibly made him look somewhat younger than his age. Also he carried himself—head and shoulders, that is—with an easy, indifferent, happy air, which, perhaps, robbed him of another year or two. His was emphatically the carriage of an easy-tempered, happy man, of a man who, it is possible, might possess strong



will, strong brain, strong muscle, but who as yet was scarcely conscious of his possessions, never having had occasion to draw upon them.

He held out his hand to help Edie from her perch.

"I suppose we ought to be going in," he said; "it's nearly luncheon-time."

But Edie did not offer to stir. She had pulled off the last leaf from her bough, and was now slowly tearing its delicate tissue into morsels.

"I told you, Phil, at breakfast this morning, that I had something of importance to say to you, if you would listen with both your ears instead of one and a half," she said in a low tone.

"But, Edie, I thought the important communication was made, and that it had reference to Lady Lovelace's visit," said Phil with an accent of surprise.

Edie went on pulling her leaf to pieces.

"I am all attention, dear," said Phil, wonder increasing on him.

Edie seemed to make a great effort. She dropped her leaf, folded her hands in her lap, and looked down into his face.

"Well, it's just this," she said, speaking as though the words would hardly come. "I have been thinking a great deal lately, and it has come into my head that somehow our engagement does not seem to be like real love-making, but more like playing at it, and that—that—that—perhaps, it would be better—better that—that—that we should not be engaged to each other any longer!"

The last half-dozen words came out with a desperate rush and hurry, and left her almost panting for breath. She had practised saying them at least a hundred and fifty times that morning in front of her looking-glass, to make sure she could give them with proper effect; but somehow now they were said they did not seem to sound one whit as she had expected they would.

Phil stood still, looking at her dumbly. Never a word found its way to his lips.

The pause was insupportable.

"Don't you understand me, Phil?" she asked, her words jerking in time and tune to her painfully beating heart.

"I don't think I do," he answered hoarsely. "I can't think you mean to throw me over, Edie, after all these years."

He was listening with both his ears now, not a doubt.

Edie began to grow troubled. Her eyes drooped, her fingers twined and twisted themselves in and out on her lap.

"I did not think you would take it in that way," she began falteringly. "I hardly know how to explain what I mean. It seems to me sometimes that we are more like brother and sister than—than—anything else. You see, we somehow slipped into our engagement without exactly knowing how, or thinking much about it—and—and—of course it's a thing that ought to be thought over——"

Here she broke off; it was absolutely impossible for her to get another word out.

Phil drew a long breath; his senses were beginning to come back to him.

"Am I to understand," he began in slow, somewhat formal tones, "that you, having thought well over our engagement, have come to the conclusion that there is something in me so objectionable that you can't possibly love me and be happy with me?"

Edie slid off her perch in a moment. She stood close to Phil's side (her head scarcely reached to his shoulder), laying her hand upon his arm, and throwing her soul into her brown eyes, which she lifted appealingly to his blue ones.

"Oh, Phil, Phil—dear Phil!" she cried, "you must not talk like that, or I shall wish I had not spoken. You don't understand me one bit, I can see. As if I ever could leave off caring for you! Why, I've known you ever since I was a baby! What I really meant to say was: I was not sure whether—whether—oh, don't you see?—whether I cared for you in the right sort of way, and whether you cared too. Don't you see—can't you understand?" Here she stamped her foot petulantly on the dry leaves at her feet. "Oh dear, oh dear! what a great, dull fellow you are. There's nothing bright about you but your eyes and your hair!"

Phil began to smile again; he loved to hear Edie talk to him in this way, it seemed more like her natural self.

"I am, as you say, Edie, a great, dull fellow," he answered quietly; "but I think I begin to see what you mean. You won't mind my telling you, dear, that you—you only of us two—are the one who need to find out whether your love is of the right sort. I am, you know, eight years older than you, and all you have just been saying came into my head exactly five years ago, and was very satisfactorily answered. Now don't you think, dear, that the easiest and best way for you to get an answer to your doubts would be to

marry me as quickly as possible—say in a month's time—you could then without much trouble find out the sort of way in which you cared for me."

His arm stole round her waist as he finished speaking. He even dared to push back her poke sun-bonnet so as to get a better view of those brown eyes and the now rapidly flushing cheek.

Eddie greatly affected poked sun-bonnets; they were such comfortable things and could be so easily tilted with a jerk from behind over her eyes when Phil took it into his head (as he often did) to say sweet or saucy things to her.

She did not try to free herself from his arm, in fact seemed very comfortable under its pressure, and to be rapidly recovering her composure.

"Now, what an absurd thing to say, It's just like you!" she cried. "Where would be the use of my finding out after we were married that I didn't like you, and didn't want to live with you. Don't you see it's the point of the whole thing that I'm to find it out before it's too late? Now do be sensible and serious, Phil, and help me out with what I want to say. I'm not asking anything very unreasonable; I only want not to be engaged for a time—say a year—and then, you know, at the end of the year, if we're both willing, we can be engaged again. That's all. There's nothing very terrible in that, is there?"

Phil grew grave again.

"Must it be a year—a whole year, Edie?" he asked; "wouldn't three months do?"

"Three months—absurd! Why, that would be like playing at breaking it off; I want it to be the real thing. No; it must be for a whole year, beginning from to-day!"

"From to-day! No, no: we needn't start so soon as all that. Let's begin at the beginning of next year, start even and fair from the 1st of January, or a little later on—say somewhere in March, about Lady Day—eh, Edie?"

And he thought to himself as he said this:

"Thank Heaven, all the detestable tennis-parties are over for this year! There are those confounded Christmas balls, though, to get through!"

Eddie was resolute.

"It must be from to-day," she said, with a great air of decision; "when you have made up your mind to a thing, there's nothing like beginning at once. Now

there's the luncheon-bell; please carry my cloak so, on that arm; my sketching portfolio so, in your other hand; now we'll walk sedately up to the house if you don't mind, and, remember, we're beginning now—this very minute—not to be engaged."

"This looks like beginning," said Phil, as he ladened himself obediently with Edie's belongings.

But Edie knew very well what she was doing. She had given Phil occupation for both his hands, and her waist was consequently set free.

It was a hot, hazy October morning; they had gone down to a quiet corner of the orchard under pretence of sketching a pretty little "bit" Edie had said she was "dying" to have framed and hung in her sitting-room. The sketch, however, had fared but badly; a few faintly-marked pencil lines were its only representatives in the portfolio Phil closed and tucked up under his arm.

The dry leaves crunched under their feet as they slowly made their way towards the house; the autumn sunlight went dancing and glancing in and out among the pear and plum trees; a late bee went by humming cheerily; a big codlin came down with a crash almost at Edie's feet.

"There's one thing more," she said, stopping suddenly on the edge of the orchard: "you must tell the papas all about it, Phil—I mean my papa and your uncle. You know men always do the asking and telling in such matters."

"Do they?" said Phil; "with exceptions, you mean. You won't forget you made me the offer in the first instance—Edie, let me see—exactly six years ago."

"When I was an absurd little dot in short frocks, and thought asking a person to marry you was much the same as asking for more pudding or a new doll! Well, at any rate now you must do all the disagreeable part. I dread telling papa, in case he should be ridiculous and lose his temper."

"Now, Edie, as if your father had ever in his whole life been known to lose his temper over anything except a game of whist!"

"Well, then, in case I might lose mine—it comes to much the same thing in the end. Now don't forget; this afternoon I'll see that you get papa all to yourself, and you must tell him that from to-day—by-the-bye, what is the date of to-day, Phil?"

"The 1st of October, 1881."

"Well, then, from the 1st of October,

1881, till the 1st of October, 1882, we are not to be engaged. Now, that's all, I think." And Edie went serenely on her way once more.

"That's not all; there's one thing more, Edie," said Phil in low, earnest tones, laying his hand on her arm.

"One thing more! What is it?" asked the unsuspecting Edie.

"This," and Phil, throwing cloak and portfolio on the ground, caught the girl in his arms, and imprinted one long, strong, passionate kiss on her lips.

"Forgive me, dear," he said humbly; "it may be so long before I shall get another!"

And a sudden sharp terror seized him as the thought rose up momentarily in his heart: "Would that kiss, in all its passionate fervour, be repeated on the 1st of October, 1882?"

## THE CLIMBS OF THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT.

### IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

SOMEONE has said of England that it is a reproduction in miniature of the scenery of the Continent. It were difficult to justify the likeness instance for instance, but certain resemblances are obvious; and if the Dart be the English Rhine, the Ventnor Undercliff the English Riviera, and so on, then with much more truth may the mountains of Cumberland and Westmoreland be said to stand for the Alps. And the climber who cannot reach the great European playground may well be content to practise upon the Cumberland peaks, which, by-and-by, he will come to respect and love—to respect for the difficult crag-work they offer, and to love for their beauty and grandeur; their gladdening views of dale, and lake, and tarn; their keen and healthful winds, like those Charles Lamb encountered atop of Skiddaw; their flying mists, and echoing storms. But he who would win their secrets from the mountains, and be filled with their inspiration, must court the mountain-spirits in their solitudes, and must shun the beaten tracks and "tourist centres." Round Ambleside you will indeed find hills and waterfalls, but the waterfalls are decked with greasy sandwich-papers and porter-bottles, and the hills echo the steam-whistles of the Windermere steamers, bringing crowds of thirsty "trippers" from the Staffordshire potteries. Brass bands play under your hotel windows; "char-a-bancs," waggonettes, and breaks of all colours rattle about with

cargoes of tourists who have been "doing" some favourite "round;" touts pester you in the streets; and in the hotel coffee-room you overhear a gentleman ask angrily: "Why don't they build a 'ut on 'Elvellyn? They 'ave one on Snowdon."

Of course Ambleside has associations. Harriet Martineau and Dr. Arnold, Wordsworth and Hartley Coleridge are great names. To-day, Mr. W. E. Forster and Mr. Matthew Arnold love and visit it, and Birket Foster has made a pretty "bit" of the old mill. But the village is vulgarised almost beyond hope. Let the railway be brought there from Windermere, and its ruin will be complete. Though there is now no Wordsworth to pen noble sonnets of protest against further railway invasions of the district, there is happily an energetic Lake District Defence Association working strenuously to save from the destruction which threatens it the sweetest spot of English ground. Already it has defeated the Borrowdale and Ennerdale schemes, and long may it be successful in keeping the railway promoters at bay! Lovers of mountains will avoid Ambleside. Keswick is better as a mountaineering centre; for Skiddaw and Blencathara, the minor heights round Derwentwater, and the beautiful range stretching from Grisedale Pike to Grasmoor are all within easy reach. The farther you get from the stale air of towns the better. Grange and Rothwaite, those beautiful Borrowdale hamlets, are tempting resting-places; but he who goes to Cumberland to walk and climb will not be satisfied till he finds himself face to face with the highest peaks at Wastdale Head.

Wastdale Head—or, more properly, Wastdale, for that part of the valley below the lake is Nether Wastdale—is the finest mountain-valley in England. Round its head are symmetrically grouped the highest English mountains—Scafell Pikes, and its companion, Scafell, Great End, and Great Gable. The lower heights of Lingmell, Kirkfell, and Yewbarrow form stately buttresses for the loftier summits beyond. On all sides the mountains plunge straight down to the valley, and if you row over the gloomy surface of Wast-water, close to the Screes, you can see the steep rocky slope continue straight down into the lake till it is lost in the black water. Approaching Wastdale Head by the carriage-road from the little coast-towns of Drigg or Seascale, where there are railway-stations, the valley appears a

cul-de-sac, and people wonder how they can get away again without retracing their steps. There are but three exits, and these are mere "fell-tracks:" steep, stony zigzags, swept by mountain-torrents in winter, and in summer forming the most detestable paths. Seven scattered farms occupy the valley, and its church and schoolhouse are the smallest in England. Wastdale Head has sown its wild oats and become decorous. But get some old dalesman in a talkative mood, and he will tell you of other times, when old "Will" Ritson, sheep-farmer, innkeeper, and wit, was the genius of the place. What fun went on then under the shadow of Scafell; what feats of fish-spearing by torchlight; what wild fox-hunts over the fells; what fine wrestling-matches on the green on summer evenings; what card-parties, and dancing, and good-humoured riot! Once someone tied a donkey by its tail to the bell-rope of the little church, and the animal's struggles raised a clangour which brought the parson rushing to the spot. But times have changed. The frolic ways have been abandoned, and the dalespeople have settled down with gravity to their two staple industries of sheep-farming and entertaining tourists. Either at the inn, or at Mrs. Thomas Tyson's famous farmhouse, climbing-men linger through the summer. Some come in winter, and then the surrounding peaks offer excellent practice for Swiss mountaineering. They are enthusiastic fellows, these climbers. They ascend their favourite mountains time after time (one honoured pioneer of lake-climbing has made ninety-nine ascents to the summit of Great Gable); they are unwearied in finding new ways up everywhere, and their talk, when they get together, is of nicks and notches, ladders and ledges, gullies, ghylls, and chimneys, and even of cols, arêtes, and couloirs. All Cumberland and Westmoreland is familiar to them; they are at home on the Blencathara Edges, looking down to the waters of the dark tarn which is said to reflect the stars at noonday, on the precipices of Scafell, and Striding Edge on Helvellyn. They have clambered among the waterfalls of Piers Ghyll, climbed the precipice of Pavey Ark and the crags of Lingmell, crossed the sloping stones wedged in the cavern at Dungeon Ghyll, scaled the crags of Great Napes on Gable, and the great couloir in the front of Great End; yet ever do they return with greater fondness to the most

enticing peak of all — the redoubtable Pillar Rock of Ennerdale.

The spell which this Rock throws over the minds of those who have once visited it is enthralling. It is of the nature of a psychological mystery not to be accounted for on ordinary grounds. It is strange. The Pillar Rock is merely a mass of crags, with no inherent difference from other masses save that it juts up boldly some nine hundred feet from the precipitous breast of the Pillar Mountain. Yet, once seen, it is as the loadstone to the pieces of iron in the story of the Third Royal Calendar. Perhaps it is the fact of its unique position, standing alone overhanging the desolate valley of Ennerdale, its apparent inaccessibility, or the tragic interest which two deaths have given it. Whatever the secret of its attraction, that attraction is undoubted. One climber, a senior wrangler and member of the Alpine Club, has scaled the Rock more than forty times, and younger men are at this moment engaged in beating his record. It has been called, with exquisite inappropriateness, the English Matterhorn and the English Schreckhorn. But it has not the terrors implied in the latter name. It is, in fact, an interesting rock, accessible from several sides, the climbs being easy or difficult, according to the side from which they are made. Let us enter into details. Ennerdale is the longest and most desolate of the mountain valleys which radiate from Great Gable, the central knot of the Scafell system. Its upper end is closed by the magnificent dome of Gable itself, and its sides are formed by the precipitous slopes of Kirkfell, the Pillar and the Steeple on the one side, and High Crag, High Stile, and Red Pike on the other. An impetuous stream, the Liza, traverses the length of the valley, and flows into Ennerdale Lake. No habitation, no sign of human life breaks the solitude of the place. The murmuring of the stream, the cry of the raven or the hawk, are the only sounds. Upper Ennerdale is not, however, unfamiliar to the tourist; for the fell-track from Wastdale to Buttermere, after ascending by Black Sail Pass, descends into Ennerdale, and mounts on the other side to Scarf Gap, and so down to Buttermere. Those following this track may see the top of the famous Pillar Rock peering over a projecting ridge of the Pillar Mountain, and the most imposing view of the rock is to be gained by proceeding along the valley till opposite to it, and then climbing up to its



base. It is a fatiguing scramble, and it has been said that the cragsman taking this route, will find the way strewn with the graves of those who have preceded him. If there is exaggeration, there is also truth in the saying. Near the foot of the Black Sail Pass is a large cairn erected to the memory of Mr. Edward Barnard, a London goldsmith, who, overcome by fatigue and heat (it was in August, 1876), there lay down and died. Not much farther, but high up on the mountain side, is an iron cross marking the spot where was found the body of the Rev. James Jackson, who, on May 1st, 1878, fell from the precipice of the Pillar Mountain. Just to the left of the Rock is the gully where the youth Walker slipped over the ice and snow, and was dashed to pieces, on Good Friday, 1883, and at any point of the walk a turn of the head will reveal the horrid gully in the precipice of Great Gable where the Rev. J. Pope was killed a year or two ago.

You see yon precipice; it wears the shape  
Of a vast building made of many crags;  
And in the midst is one particular rock  
That rises like a column from the vale,  
Whence by our shepherds it is called the Pillar.

Thus did "the homely priest of Ennerdale" describe the Pillar Rock to Leonard in Wordsworth's poem, *The Brothers*, and the description is accurate. The whole Ennerdale front of the Pillar is broken up by projecting ridges which form a series of recesses or coves. In one of the largest of these coves stands the Pillar Rock, springing upward almost perpendicularly on the Ennerdale side to a height of eight hundred and seventy-five feet, but united on its other side to the Pillar Mountain by a neck, about one hundred feet below the summit of the Rock. All climbs are best begun from this neck, and to reach it from Wastdale it is best to ascend the Pillar Mountain from the Black Sail Pass, and walk on the level grassy summit till the small heath-covered top of the Rock is seen in air on the right-hand side, many feet below. An easy though steep scramble down the mountain-side then lands you on the neck. This route saves the long climb up to the base of the Rock from Ennerdale. Heated pedestrians approaching the Pillar from the valley have even been known to get bewildered by the many crags, to dispute among themselves as to which was the Pillar Rock, and to fall out by the way.

Standing on the narrow neck the Rock is immediately in front, and steep gullies

sweep down to right and left. The left or western gully can be descended, and from a point about half-way down the "west climb" is commenced. The right or eastern gully, after descending steeply for several yards ends in a sudden pitch. Viewed from the neck the Rock does not justify its name. A scramble round its base will reveal it to be a cumbrous mass of crags, its greatest length extending north and south up the mountain-side. In three places it is cleft perpendicularly by deep gullies or chimneys, whose lines of cleavage are parallel to Ennerdale, and therefore at right angles to the greatest length of the Rock. These gullies split the Rock into four separate summits; the highest is called the "High Man," and the others "Low Men." (In the Lake District all lower summits are called "Low Men.") From the neck an easy way to the highest summit seems to present itself directly in front. The climber mounts gaily and with confidence, only to find himself cut off from the High Man by an impassable cleft, forty feet long on the level part at the bottom, thirteen feet wide at the bottom, and broadening towards the top. Opposite rises the main rock in a fine wall sixty feet high. This is the most southerly of the three gullies mentioned above. By an authority on the Pillar this false rock has been christened *Pisgah*, and the gap, *Jordan*.

Descending then from *Pisgah* to the neck, the attack must now be made from the right-hand or east side. Looking across to the Rock, a smooth sloping slab is conspicuous on its side. Make for this by scrambling a few yards down the east gully, and then ascending two natural steps (known as "the first ladder") about six feet high, which conduct to the upper edge of the "Broad Slab." The slab is covered with grass on its upper part; the lower part is smooth, and ends abruptly over the east gully. It is forty feet in length, twenty-nine in width, and slopes at an angle of thirty-seven degrees. A crack about two inches wide runs horizontally across the slab, and without this aid crossing it would be a matter of some little difficulty, for there is a considerable drop on to the rough rocks of the east gully from the lower edge, and a slip here is not to be recommended. The crack affords good foot-hold, and a few steps carry you across the Broad Slab. A few yards of uneven but safe walking conduct to a sort of corner, where the climber is confronted



by a projecting curtain, with a deep notch between it and the main mass. To the left rises the erect wall of the Pillar; on the right is a precipice of about sixty feet. From this grassy corner there is a perplexing choice of inviting (or uninviting) routes, and strangers have been known to bother about for half an hour or more and then sometimes give up the ascent, unable to find a way. From the corner there are, however, at least three ways of ascent, known respectively as the routes by "the notch," "the ledge," and the "arête." The notch way is far the easiest. Scramble up to the left-hand, aiming for the floor of the notch, between the curtain and the main mass. A moderate climb of twenty-four feet lands you on the floor of the notch, here twenty-one feet thick, and you find yourself on the south wall of the "Great Chimney," which is the name given to the middle one of the three gullies which have been mentioned as dividing the main mass of the Pillar Rock. The Great Chimney begins just at the top of the steep pitch in the east gully, and cleaves the rock almost to its highest summit. Seventy feet from its base, the chimney contains a sloping shelf, covered with rough grass. This shelf is sixty feet in length, slopes at an angle of forty-five degrees, and is known to the esoteric circle of "Pillarites" as the "Steep Grass." At the top of the Steep Grass the Great Chimney suddenly narrows, and dwindles to a small perpendicular chimney twenty-three feet high, about the width of an ordinary human body, and containing a large stone jammed half-way up. When on the floor of the notch the Steep Grass can be reached by a drop of eight feet. The easiest way, however, is to continue the ascent over comparatively easy rocks, keeping the Great Chimney on the right till you emerge on the grass at the top of the small chimney, whence a run carries you to the highest summit. Here you may add your visiting-card to the others in the tin-box hidden in the cairn, or you may sign your name in the visitors' book obligingly left for this purpose by two London climbers in 1882.

This is probably the easiest way of ascending the Rock, though it is almost unknown. The only way which seems known to the local guides is that by the ledge. To ascend by way of the ledge from the corner below the notch, the climber must first get up the cleft or natural ladder in the curtain, which is

directly in front after coming over the broad slab. The cleft—the "second ladder"—runs up the face of the curtain for ten feet, then broadens out into a scoop and ends; but from the scoop a ledge is to be seen running to the right and winding round the curtain. The second ladder presents no difficulty to a moderate climber, as the hand-holds and foot-holds are plentiful. It is not, however, a place to run up, as the face of the curtain here turns outwards towards the precipice in an unpleasing manner, and a slip would precipitate the climber on to the rocks of the east gully, some sixty feet below. Once up the ladder, the scoop offers a safe refuge, and the right foot must be placed on the ledge, which is here only about eighteen inches wide. There is, however, excellent hand-hold and foot-hold, and though there is a deep fall immediately behind, none but those with very unsteady heads need be afraid to trust themselves on the ledge. Almost immediately, it curves round the curtain, broadens out to ten or fifteen feet, and inclines downwards, when you step from it on to another corner of grassy ground. A swing round a little jutting rock with a seventy-foot drop just behind lands you on the lower edge of the Steep Grass. Scrambling up to the top, the small chimney is attacked by insinuating the body, and working upwards till just under the jammed stone. Throwing the arms round this, the climber gets his breast upon it, and then a brief struggle, while the feet are unoccupied in mid-air, enables him first to kneel and then to stand upon the stone. The upper part of the chimney is then attacked with ease, and the climber emerges at the point reached by the climb from the notch already described. This route by the ladder, ledge, and chimney was, it is said, first discovered by Mr. Leslie Stephen and a party of University men, about the year 1854. It is a pleasant and varied climb which does not overtax the powers of a moderate cragsman. Mr. H. I. Jenkinson, indeed, in his excellent Guide to the English Lakes (6th edition, 1879), says: "The rock has been scaled by very few, and it is exceedingly hazardous and foolhardy to attempt it;" but it must be presumed that this very exaggerated warning is intended for the waggonette-tourist, and not for the cragsman. The ascent from the notch by the "arête" (or south wall of the Great Chimney) is a much harder climb than

either of these already described. It has been accomplished by only four or five men, and at one point near the top, where both hands have to be clasped round a pinnacle rock while the weight is partly sustained by the knees, it verges on the dangerous.

The three climbs already described are all on the east side of the rock, and they lead direct to the High Man, the total height ascended being about one hundred feet. But there are other and longer climbs both on the east and west side of the rock which conduct to the summit of the Low Man, whence there is some good climbing to reach the highest point. Those climbs are very little known, and any detailed description of them is impossible, as they may be varied in several ways. As far as the summit of the Low Man, where the east and west routes unite, they are scrambles rather than climbs; but during the whole ascent great care is necessary, for on slipping on these sides of the rock the cragsman would bound from one rocky ledge to another, and finally pitch to the very base of the rock, if not beyond—a matter of some five hundred feet. More than one way may be taken from the Low Man to the High Man, but one is chiefly used. Care is necessary throughout; and the worst bit is the ascent of a wall of rock close to a poised block which is easily recognisable. The descent here is especially awkward. Indeed, in nine cases out of ten the descent of rocks is more difficult than the ascent; had we eyes in our heels the difficulties would be equalised. Two ascents to High Man have been made from Jordan Gap by Mr. W. P. Haskett-Smith, the first and only cragsman who has accomplished this feat. Much of our recent knowledge of the Pillar is due to Mr. Haskett-Smith, a most skilful and daring climber. This gentleman has ascended the rock by more than twelve distinct routes, and to his courtesy we are indebted for several of the measurements of parts of the Rock which are here made public for the first time.

Of early ascents of the Pillar Rock little is known. By the dalespeople it was long considered inaccessible, and Mr. G. Seetree, in his little pamphlet on the Lake District, says that it was first scaled by "a hardy young shepherd, named Atchinson," in the year 1826. Speaking of this, or some other early ascent, to a member of the Alpine Club, an old dalesman said, in that Cumberland dialect which is now

becoming so rare: "Fwoks deah sai theer waz a chap at yance gat tul t' toop efter a fox, bit t' crahg waz seah brant an' slape in yah pleace at theer waz neah hod for owdther hand ner feit, an' he hed to ram his jackalegs into a lahl crack to sarra for a step up." It may be noted that the shepherd James, in Wordsworth's poem *The Brothers*, is described as being killed through falling from the summit of the Pillar Rock, and the supposition that the poet was here confounding the top of the Rock with the top of the mountain, is precluded by the accurate description he gives of the place in an earlier passage. The writer of Murray's *Handbook to the Lakes* was not, however, so well informed; for he makes the astounding assertion that the Pillar Rock is the top of the Pillar Mountain. Of ascents between that of the shepherd in 1826, and that of Mr. Leslie Stephen, about 1854, little or nothing can be discovered, though the name of a Mr. Baumgarten is mentioned as among the first. It was not till 1874 that the Rock became known. About that time a bottle was deposited on the top, and visitors left their cards; but, on June 29th, 1876, two navvies who reached the top, carried away the bottle, cards, handkerchiefs, and other mementoes of the early climbers. As far as can be ascertained, a Miss A. Barker, who ascended July 9, 1870, was the first lady to reach the top; Miss Mary Westmoreland, of Penrith, was the second (1874); Mrs. Ann Crears (June, 1875) being the third; and Miss Edith Maitland and Miss Butler (August, 1875) the fourth and fifth. But of all the earlier climbers of the Pillar Rock, the Rev. James Jackson, the octogenarian clergyman of Sandwith, near Whitehaven, was the most remarkable. This enthusiastic old mountaineer was a man of character; energetic, quick-tempered, and eccentric. He was a bit of a versifier, had travelled on the Continent, and had brought home certain relics from Loretto, which he deposited on the top of the Pillar Rock, whence they were ruthlessly carried by the vandal navvies in 1876. He had an enthusiastic love for his native lake mountains, "from Black Comb to Skiddaw," and in his ramblings on the fells, he had often looked down longingly to the Pillar Rock from the mountain, but deemed it inaccessible. Having read, however, a rhyming account of their ascent, contributed to a local paper by the Messrs. Thomas and Edward Westmoreland, two noted Penrith climbers, the old clergyman resolved to try,

and aided by ropes and spiked nails he succeeded in reaching the top on May 31, 1875. Mr. Jackson was then in his seventy-ninth year, and he was immensely pleased with his achievement. He dubbed himself "Patriarch of the Pillarites," and at once took the Rock under his especial care. On May 1st, 1878, this fine old mountaineer, then in his eighty-second year, fell a victim to his passion for climbing. He started from Wastdale, provided with poles and ropes, intending to ascend the Rock; but as he did not return, search-parties were organised, and on the second day his body was found in a large hollow called Great Doup, somewhat to the east of the Rock. The 1st of May had been misty, and it was evident that he had approached too near the edge of the precipice, had lost his balance, and fallen a distance of about three hundred feet. In a bottle in his pocket, which he had intended to leave on the Rock, were these lines:

Two elephantine properties are mine,  
For I can bend to pick up pin or plack;  
And when this year the Pillar Rock I climb  
Fourscore and two's the howdah on my back.

Two years later two veteran lovers of the Lake Mountains (Mr. F. H. Bowring and the late Mr. J. Maitland, who had been playfully appointed "presumptive patriarch" by Mr. Jackson) placed a cairn and iron cross on the spot where the old man's body was found.

The sad death of the youth Walker, who was killed on Good Friday, 1883, by slipping on the snow and falling over the precipice of the east gully, has also led to the belief that the Rock is more dangerous than it really is. No accident has yet occurred on the Rock itself, nor need there be any if it be attempted in proper weather by active, steady-headed cragsmen. Between twenty and thirty persons reach the summit every year, and of these probably three or four are ladies. Almost all ordinary climbers go by the ladder, ledge, and chimney route, which is, indeed, the only one at all generally known. Ladies attempting the ascent will find an Alpine dress a great convenience. The actual top of the Rock is small, and to look over into Ennerdale gives something of the impression of being on a mast-head at sea. A unique ascent was made during the present summer, when a party of seven (including two ladies) climbed the Rock by the little-known east route, starting from the bottom of the Great Chimney,

and took a guitar with them to the top. A pleasant hour of good music followed.

In another article we shall give an account of climbs in other parts of the Lake District.

### THE MUD VOLCANOES OF CALIFORNIA.

CALIFORNIAN travellers—and nowadays there are many of them—almost universally follow one beaten track, taking San Francisco as their head-quarters, and making flying excursions from thence to the Big Trees of Mariposa and the Yosemite Valley. Where every department of Nature is on such a gigantic scale, it is, perhaps, but natural that the attention of visitors, whose time is generally limited, should be concentrated on what is certainly one of the most remarkable districts in the continent of the New World, though it should not be inferred that it exhausts the curiosities of Rocky Mountain and Californian exploration. No matter what are the scientific tendencies of the traveller, California can gratify them all, and its unrivalled scenery and numerous physical phenomena will furnish sufficient material for years of patient observation. One of the most extraordinary contrasts to be found in any country, and one which cannot fail to strike the most casual observer, is the variations of altitude that characterise the surface of the land.

California contains within its limits some of the highest ground in the world—after the Himalayas—and also some of the lowest—not excepting Holland. Through the centre of the state runs the wild and jagged Sierra Nevada, dominated by the precipitous cliffs of Mount Whitney, over fourteen thousand feet; but as the Mexican border is approached on the south, the hills gradually give way, and eventually sink into the Californian desert, which is actually two hundred feet below the sea-level. A desert, wherever it may be, is never an attractive tourist-ground, and this one, by nature, forms no exception to the rule; but it has one great advantage—viz., that its whole breadth is traversed by the South Pacific Railway, on its way from Texas to the Californian city of Los Angeles, and that therefore the dangers and dreariness of the passage are reduced to about twenty-four hours, spent in easy luxury in the armchairs of the Pullman-car. Once we have crossed the Colorado river, we leave Arizona and enter California,

amazed at the pertinacity of the American engineers, who carry their lines through the loftiest passes in the Rockies with the same boldness as they do through the trackless wastes of the desert; and although the dead flat presents no real engineering difficulties, it has dangers of its own in the sandstorms, which are peculiarly disagreeable to encounter. When there is a strong wind blowing, the sand rises in huge clouds, which turn day into night, and make it perfectly impossible for the traveller to proceed without a compass, while the sharp silicious pebbles with which the air is filled, render it a matter of impossibility to face the wind. There is nothing for it but to pull up and halt until the storm is gone by, and even the train, with its tremendous weight, is delayed for many hours, from the mass of sand which is piled up on the rails. Under any circumstances, the passage of the desert gives one a kind of nightmare from its exceeding monotony, its bizarre vegetation of cactus and sage-bush, its glaring atmosphere, and its sickly white carpet of sand stretching as far as the eye can reach; but, with all these drawbacks, it is well worth a visit, if only to see the salt geysers and mud volcanoes.

But before describing the Pandemonium-like effects of this burnt-up region, the physical features of the desert itself are curious and interesting, and illustrate in a marked degree the power for good and evil possessed by water; for from various signs, patent to those who can read them, it is clear that it was not always an arid waste, but, on the contrary, a great inland sea, extending for at least two hundred miles. If we look at the map, we shall notice that a long peninsula, called Lower California, but really belonging to Mexico, stretches south for a considerable distance between the Pacific and the Mexican mainland, and that it is entered on the north by the Colorado river, which is joined a little higher up by the Gila. Having mastered this little bit of geography, it is evident that, once upon a time, the Gulf of California spread over this great plain, and that it might, and probably would, do so again, if the alluvial matter brought down by the Colorado was removed. When we consider the amazing depth and length of the Grand Canon, through which the river has carved its way for a thousand miles or so, it is clear that this detritus must have been deposited somewhere in the neigh-

bourhood. Indeed, the river took its name—Colorado—from the tint of the water, caused by the material from the red rocks of Arizona, which even coloured the Gulf to such an extent that it was once known as the Vermilion Sea. In fact, a great delta was formed, which caused the Gulf to recede, finally cutting off a portion, which at first became an inland salt lake; and as the banks of the river rose, so that the stream flowed directly into the Gulf, the lake gradually dried up, leaving in its lowest depression an extensive bed of salt which still exists.

The changes thus brought about were probably not of such very ancient geological date, and, indeed, are occasionally reproduced on a small scale even now; and it is no wonder that the desert has been the birthplace of many traditionary legends, especially when coupled with the fiery belchings of the mud and salt volcanoes, in themselves quite uncanny enough to scare away any number of natives. The researches of modern observers and geologists have, however, proved that, with all its terrors, the district contains many elements of riches. The ground underneath is a perfect laboratory of chemical and mineral products. There are salt, borax, sulphur, and nitrate of soda to be had for the digging, while gold-mines are worked within the limits of the desert; and though it does not appear to be very promising agricultural land, a plentiful irrigation would make it blossom like a rose. Indeed, all up the Gila valley there are remains of extensive irrigation works, constructed by the primitive inhabitants, so that what could be done then could surely be done now.

Nothing seems so out of place in this weird region as the railway-station of Volcano, which, from the nature of the ground, is seen from an amazing distance. It is not unlikely that it is approached under certain mirage effects, when it appears to be dangling in the sky, and altogether occupying a position quite unfit for a proper and well-regulated station. Any ornamentation is quite unnecessary for a building in such a locality, where there is no neighbourhood to admire it, for it does not seem probable that a single passenger-ticket is issued from one year's end to another. But it serves its purpose as a watering-place for the engines, and, ugly as it is, its construction is well adapted to the intensely high temperature, which in summer is usually one hundred and twenty-



five degrees in the shade, while that of the night is seldom below one hundred and ten degrees. The only way to guard against the daily scorching, and make the station habitable for the officials, was to give it a double roof, one being at an elevation of four feet above the other.

The volcanic element is not far to seek, although it is on a comparatively small scale; and as the train comes to a stand, a long line of figures, looking perfectly black in the glare of the sun, emerge from the cars and struggle across the plain to visit a small solfaterra of evil and malicious aspect, and with an equally evil smell. The latter, indeed, is the only sure guide to it, for it is merely a depression of a few feet in depth, occupying a circular area of about half an acre. Scattered about are a number of little cones, some three or four feet high, from which there is a constant hissing discharge of sulphurous, carbonic, and hydrosulphuric acid gas, that in its escape forces up a quantity of black mud. As the force becomes expended, the mud assumes a bubble-like appearance, and finally gives a little jerk into the air, falling back exhausted in the effort with a loud flop.

Although the cones are very hot, no steam comes from them, and it is evident that the vitality of this little group of volcanoes is very feeble, and will probably soon expire altogether. It serves, however, as some index to the force and vividness of the great system of "salses," which lie about six miles from the station, the jets and clouds of steam on the horizon betokening their whereabouts. A more arduous six miles' excursion is not to be found on this side the globe, and it should not be undertaken without preparation and great caution. The danger arising from the heat, both overhead and underground, is sufficient reason why these singular phenomena have been so rarely visited, only three occasions of the kind being on record. The first excursionists (in 1850) were Dr. Le Conte, of Philadelphia, and Major Heintzelman, of the United States Army, who, being quartered at San Diego, had their curiosity excited by the rumours of an active volcano in the middle of a great salt plain. It was a long and difficult journey across the desert, and it very nearly failed, for as soon as the Indian guides caught sight of the distant cloud of steam, they refused to go any farther, stating that devils had been known to rise from the volcanoes, in the shape of

great black birds, which pounced upon their victims and devoured them. It appeared that some years back, a trader named Juan Longeusse had ventured to the spot, and was immediately destroyed by the birds; the real solution of the matter, that poor Juan went too near to the geyser, and that the crust of the surface let him in and instantaneously swallowed him. After all the trouble of the long journey, Dr. Le Conte could not remain for more than a very few hours before he was obliged to beat a retreat, and the same happened to Dr. Veatch in 1857, who visited the place to search for borax. He could only stay for an hour and a quarter, while the next batch of visitors, consisting of Mr. Hanks, the state mineralogist, Mr. Smith, and a Chinaman (in 1881), nearly shared the fate of the trader Juan, Mr. Hanks having to be carried back with badly burnt feet, which invalidated him for six weeks. It is evident, therefore, that the Californian volcanoes are not to be rashly approached, and are never likely to be included in the programme of a personally-conducted expedition.

As seen from Volcano Station, the ground between it and the salses appears a perfect level, although in reality it is a continuous series of ravines, not very deep, but exceedingly fatiguing to cross. The soil is made up of incredible numbers of tertiary shells, so minute as to require one hundred and sixty-six thousand to weigh a pound, and these have been banked up by the wind in regular rows, as if they had been mowed down, and were waiting to be made into cocks and carried. The mirage effects are extremely curious, and are thus described by Mr. Hanks: "When we had passed over about half the distance, we seemed to have entered a charmed circle. Instead of the sandy plain of reality, a visionary lake of water lay before us, skirted with trees which required no vivid imagination to recognise as palms. Although knowing this to be a mirage, it was almost impossible to see anything illusive in the picture of the lake, with hills in the foreground every now and again transformed into islands. Turning towards the station, it was seen as a castle several storeys high. As we gazed, the upper portion became detached, and, by some optical fiction, globular, and seemed to rise like a balloon, and fade away in the air. In the distance might be seen a large object, of undefined shape, seemingly a mile away. As we approached, it rapidly dwindled to a fragment of pumice-stone, not bigger



than an egg, the real distance not being more than a hundred yards. Hogarth's picture of perspective would not seem so absurd, were it placed in a phantom picture-gallery in the Colorado desert."

The last mile of the journey is the most perplexing, although the ravines have all been crossed and are succeeded by an inclined plain, sloping towards the salt basin. But the dry sand is now replaced by layers of hot sand, which clings to the feet like melting snow, and "balls" in a most alarming manner, while it is impossible to keep the feet still for a single instant, on pain of sinking to an unknown depth. Fortunately, a rim of comparatively dry land surrounds the geysers, which would otherwise be perfectly unapproachable. Within this rim are three mud lakes, two of them connected with each other by a narrow channel, and the length of the whole being about one thousand five hundred feet. The surface is a seething mass in constant activity, globular elevations being continually pushed up, and the balls thus formed shot into the air, according to the strength of the propelling gases; and a quantity of water is mixed with the mud, the temperature varying from eighty-five degrees to boiling-point. A cone once formed, grows rapidly from the ejected material overflowing and running down; and the nature of the overflow is such that it does not make a cone with a wide base, as would be the case if dry sand was poured slowly out of a spout, but shows a tendency to build up sharp pinnacles, with angles from sixty to seventy-five degrees from the horizontal. Of course, the area of the disturbed surface would increase indefinitely were the cones of a lasting character, but this is prevented by the very thin crust of the ground, for when the weight becomes too much for it, the cone sinks down, and a new one is immediately commenced. Each one of the numerous active vents gives off an incessant flow of gas, each having its different sound, varying from a sharp hiss to the roar of a locomotive letting off steam. The most noisy of all, however, is a simple orifice in the ground, which emits a scream as from a dozen safety-valves.

With all the deafening uproar, the infernal smell, and the general demoniacal appearance of the place, there are elements of great beauty about it. Many of the vents are fringed with exquisite crystals of bright yellow sulphur and snow-white salt, which in some cases partly cover the

sides of the cones. Others are plastered over with blue mud, which, in contrast with the salt and sulphur, have the appearance of miniature mountains decorated with flowers. The most singular ornamentation, however, is one of inverted stalactites, formed of carbonate of lime, and each having a channel for the escape of the steam. They are of a dirty-white colour tipped with red, very like coral in course of formation, and are remarkable instances of the deposition of minerals by the action of thermal springs. The building up of these stalactites must be very slow, for they were measured and described by Dr. Le Conte just thirty-one years before Mr. Hanks visited the spot, and they were found by the latter to have undergone very little material change.

### STONY LANE.

#### A STORY.

It was almost cruel of the authorities to stick such a name in radiant blue and white paint at the corner of the lane. As if working-folk had not sufficient hardness in their lot without being made publicly to acknowledge that they lived in such a proverbially dry and stony place!

"But it looks cheery, though," said a girl who sat at a window stitching uppers.

Of course the word means the upper part of a boot or shoe. Stony Lane was one niche in a big town, where all the world lived and died, feasted and starved on leather—and what came of it.

Statistics of the shoemaker's trade would be dull; at the outside one does not look upon the business as brilliant, or suggestive of poesy, or giving any—even the least—scope for one's artistic instincts. But one girl, you see, thought even the newly-painted name of the street cheery; she must have had a cheerful heart, than which there is no possession more delightful.

Truth to say, Stony Lane looked its best. The early sun came slanting down athwart the shining vane of the old church-tower, touching up the brand-new white letters at the lane's corner, then sweeping over flower-pots with scarlet geraniums and musk in them, until the pebbly footway actually shone.

Footway and roadway were all in one; it was an ancient quarter, made, doubtless, when countryfolk, and townfolk, too, trudged afoot. A row of two-storeyed houses ran along on each side, strongly-

built houses of good flint; there were no decorations in the way of railings, no ornament except what the indwellers made of outer greenery and inner muslin.

It was grey, and dreary, and stony in winter, a sort of cavern of darkness, with its one lamp projected by an iron arm from its centre house; but in summer—well, in summer it could be bright enough.

"Cheery," as the girl had said of its newly-painted name—Elizabeth, or Lil, Brice was her name, emphatically the type of a Townlingham shoe-girl. She earned her money and spent it. Who should remark upon the smartness of a girl's dress when she has earned every thread of it herself? Lil Brice was always smart.

"Yes," answered a companion; "yes, it's cheery. But it don't suit."

"There's one of your fallals; don't try and make me take up with them, because I can't. No, Mary Weldon, I can't."

"The place is all old together, and, as I take it, the old letters were of a piece with it."

The speaker was evidently a girl of another type; she was dressed differently—even in working hours it is easy to make a difference in style—and her face was of a more delicate colour and form.

Lil was brown and strong.

"Them old things!" she cried. "No one saw them except you; if so be all Townlingham didn't know Stony Lane they'd never have made it out, writ as it were. Them lectures have put notions into your head, girl!"

"Yes," said Mary, in quite a different spirit to that of Lil's remark; "yes, I'm getting to see things—"

"Your work's none so grand!"

"It's no worse, though."

"Well, I don't hold with lectures; I'm for going out for walks o' summer nights. So'd you, if—"

And she laughed aloud. The other girl could take a joke.

"Very likely," she answered, laughing low. "But the lecture's one night in the week, and I can walk other nights."

"Walk!" with supreme contempt.

Lil Brice "walked" with a railway-porter; Mary Weldon went with other girls. So, without doubt, there was, in the eyes of Lil and of girls of her class, an unmistakable and broad gulf of division between the manner in which they severally took their evening saunter.

Very lovely was it over the Townlingham meadows in the cool, after a hot July

day. Just work closely at hard leather-work yourself for ten hours, and then see if there be not a new charm in the already fair radiance of a summer evening.

One's muscles relax, one's limbs are free; one no longer sits cramped in heavy, heated air. One could run, or, being tired, there were banks to sit on whence the cricketers could be seen.

Naturally Lil was always by the cricket-field, for when Bob Drayson was not with her he was playing—he was the crack Townlingham bowler.

She and Mary worked together, for Mary had lodged with the Brices in Stony Lane since her stepmother had sent her in from her village to work. Mary was fatherless as well as motherless, and her stepmother had her hands full, and wanted the higher town wage. She was by no means a cruel or a hard woman, beyond the hardness that must inevitably grow up beside a straitened, bare life. Mary could not rough it in farm-work, so she set her to shoe-work. The girl was wasting and pining till some chance took her one winter's night to hear a lecture.

The Kyrle Society never got down to Townlingham, but there were some people in the neighbourhood who had taken up the idea of giving art to the people. They worked their idea in their own way. Stony Lane this summer had got flowers at nearly every house. The Brices even at last had them, thanks to Mary's quiet though persistent begging. She would tend them if she might have them, so the strong, plain Brices gave in. And Mary lifted herself from the dreariness of the weary work, and as the summer grew held her own bravely against Lil and her wild jests.

One day there was a merrymaking outside the town, a school-treat, and a Foresters' or a club fête—it matters not what. At any rate, the great field, lent for such business, was full when the evening came; children's games were going on, and games in which elder children played went on at the same time. They danced, too, these Townlingham girls, to the music of a violin.

There are players and players. This one, Hal Coates, was no awkward scraper of a fiddle, but went in for what to a few he called classical music, but what with the unenlightened he only called "his tunes," giving no specification beyond that to ears which could not understand.

He was overlooker at the factory which gave Lil and Mary their work. What with

indoor hands and outdoor hands he had a tribe to rule.

He came from the next county, and amongst the shoe-girls there was a notion that Coates came of well-to-do folk.

Here is a specimen of their opinion of him. Shoe-girls do not mince matters: they call a spade a spade.

"Mary," said Lil as she passed her dancing, she herself grand in the possession of her lover's arm, "your game's no good. I've known six—aye, six try it on in my time, and no good come of it to them. They lost a good chance, more'n one of them. Don't you do it."

"What things you say!" returned Mary. "I never know half you mean."

"Then you are stupid. Don't you flatter yourself Coates looks at you—he don't. He's one of your lecture people, and he'll marry his fiddle, but never a shoe-girl!"

Mary could not mistake. She coloured, her pale cheeks matched the cherry-coloured tie she wore to fasten her collar; for the moment she could not answer.

Why so?

Lil had hit upon the truth. She did think—nay, five minutes ago she would have been sure in her heart that Coates had pointedly asked her—her and no other—what should be the next dance. But now?

She flashed out this one angry word:

"No fear! I am as good as any—aye, as good as he, if I am a shoe-girl."

"Highty-tighty! we are angry at last. Well, I'd stop dancing, then; maybe he'd give over fiddling—eh?"

Mary's fire had died away.

"Not he," she said quietly. "He knows they can't dance without his music; he has learnt to look for other folk's pleasure, if he's learnt naught else at the rooms. We girls don't get nights like this many days in the year!"

Lil and her lover walked away.

But the fair and beautiful night was spoilt for Mary. She stopped dancing and drew away. Even when Coates came and spoke to her, as he had grown accustomed to speak to her, she gave no such answer as he looked for.

Perhaps he was as sensitive as she was—he, too, drew away. And then he played on, but, for himself, the music was soulless, there was no dancing in the spirit, though the quick tunes jumped and rollicked for the dancing feet of the girls.

Mary went home early. Stony Lane was empty, the sun was down, and the moon had not risen, and her feet dragged

wearily over the stones. Never before had she felt so alone; never before had she cried over the mother she had never known. She did not know why, but she felt vaguely that that mother would never have cast her child into that busy, lonely town. What could she do? Should she try to find her mother's people? They were Burley folk. Burley folk! No, she would never seek Burley.

Burley was the place Hal Coates had come from years back, they said. Better to be alone in the crowds of Townlingham, than perchance to meet—aye, and to be forced into acquaintance with—other Coates in the little town of Burley. Yes, better far! She cried herself to sleep that night.

All the summer went. Lil got married; and Lil, from the grandeur of her own doings, became wilder, and more reckless, and sharper upon Mary.

Rude jests were flung at the girl, and from taking them quietly she at last grew to stiffen herself with pride and to become quite silent when Lil and certain of her companions came near her.

All the world gets a holiday in some counties at Whitsuntide. They make it a time of beginning and ending service, and Mary had nearly endured a year of her hard life when the home-going time was at hand. For a day she was going. And in her own mind she was going, so to speak, to move heaven and earth, rather than come back to the purgatory of Stony Lane and its rough ways.

The white May light swept down the street as she walked up it from taking her work to the factory. She had a parcel in her arms of gifts she was taking home, and that she had bought as she passed the big shops.

Stony Lane was all but empty. Folks were out shopping and strolling. Brice, the father, stood in his shirt-sleeves at his door, smoking the pipe of nightly custom. Suddenly Mary felt rather than saw someone come from behind her to her side. Her cheeks flushed. Did she know?

Yes. She had twice avoided meeting that same person. Now she hurried on to old Brice.

"Stop—wait!" said the person. It was Coates, as may be surmised. "You avoid me, Mary, but I must speak to you. Yes, the time has come when I—when you must listen."

Mary trembled. She could not do less than stop.

"Yes," said she.

"I cannot go on——" he began.

Then Mary wondered, and the thought which had made her tremble passed into another thought—it was of himself, and of himself alone, that this young man would speak. She stood and raised her fair head quietly, yet proudly.

"You want——"

"I want much," he ended for her. "Do you know what you and I are to each other, Mary?"

What a strange question! The girl felt her pulse dance, but the months past had made her so strong and so proud that she could rule her features and her speech. Perhaps she flushed a little, but she answered:

"Master and maid, I suppose."

He clapped his hands together. He was a tall, fine-grown young man now. He had a manner which made him almost like Mary as he, too, drew himself up, and answered as proudly as she had done:

"That point does not touch us at all—as I see things." A moment's silence followed. Then, looking straight into her eyes, he said: "We are cousins."

She could only gaze—strangely, wildly.

"It is true. Your mother was a Burley woman; she and my mother were sisters. It is only a short while since I knew this. I have waited until to-day because—because I had made up my mind—because now it is all easy."

This was most vague and hesitating.

But no word came from Mary's lips; she could not find anything to say.

"You go home to-morrow?" said he.

"Yes."

"And now I am going to ask you not to come back here, but——"

"That is just what I had made up my mind to do. Now, certainly, it will be better that your cousin should not be a 'hand.'"

He only smiled a grave and quiet smile at her.

"That was a mean thing to say, Mr. Coates," she said, after a pause; "I am sorry I said it!"

"You are my cousin, Mary; so, when I have said my say, I shall try and scold you."

She could not understand him.

"I have a plan. I will go home with you to-morrow to Dilsham, and I will talk to your stepmother. Then we will together go to Burley, and you shall stay with my mother."

"You won't set mother to make me go against my will?"

"Is it likely your will will be against it?"

"Yes, very likely. I cannot go to Burley—no, not now—not yet."

She was direfully troubled.

"I shall only be there for a day."

How oddly he had fathomed her thought! She felt her face become one flame of scarlet.

"But—Mary, listen—I was hoping that you would be with my mother, and that one day I should run over to Burley, say a month from to-day, and that instead of being only my cousin, you would be my wife. That is why I do not want you back in Townlingham. I will not have you back until I bring you—my wife!"

A masterful lover is the best lover. What girl cares for a weak, puny slave?

By-and-by the moon glinted down Stony Lane, and its grey dimness vanished in a flood of clear whiteness. What a long talk must have been going on!

Ah, well! Perhaps something more was said than the little we have written down; but, if so, there was no one to hear, for even old Brice had gone away—carried himself and his pipe where he would find company.

And, for Stony Lane to tell secrets—Stones do not speak.

Never mind the speech. Stony Lane felt grand when, a month hence, Mary brought her husband, the head man of Barnes's factory, into the Brices' house.

#### THE YARMOUTH TOLHOUSE.\*

It is not always convenient when an extensive country possesses several towns bearing the same name. Love-letters may go unpleasantly astray, to say nothing of bank-notes and cheques. In this respect at least, we are comparatively sinless, and not so bad as other men are. True, we have more than one Lynn, several Thorpes, several Caistors (castra, camps, fortresses), and more than one Newcastle—which latter might be distinguished by calling the youngest town Newcastle, if we only knew which was the newest.

The United States, with their Londons and Cambridges, and other adoptions from our poor old country, almost abuse their

\* The Tolhouse at Great Yarmouth, by Frederick Danby Palmer. J. Buckle, Great Yarmouth, 1884.



right to christen yesterday's-built cities at their pleasure. But, the worse-confounding of topographical confusion is a matter of little import there. In a land of liberty, may not every man misname his own fresh-fixed residence as he chooses?

In Switzerland, there is Neuchâtel (both town and canton), and in France, Neufchâtel (whence come cream-cheeses), and also Neufchâteau, unless it has been included in Bismarck's annexations. But France abounds in towns synonymous with others lying within its own or in neighbouring territories. It has Frenchified Aachen into Aix, although it has an Aix in Provence; besides which, there is, in Savoy, another Aix (les-Bains), close to, though not on the banks of, the Lac du Bourget. There is an Arles at the foot of the Pyrenees, a quaint little market-town, typical of southern ways, within an easy and pleasant drive, or even walk, of Amélie-les-Bains; and there is a much bigger Arles in Provence, west of Marseilles, with a famous Roman amphitheatre, and "justly celebrated," says Murray's Handbook, "for the beauty of its women."

As to Montreuil, they may actually be counted by the dozen. The French Clermonts, too, are a widespread family.

England can boast of two Yarmouths only—if they were all like our Yarmouth, she might be proud of a score. I do not reckon Southtown, otherwise Little Yarmouth, in Suffolk, because it is only a hamlet of the Norfolk Yarmouth. One is in the Isle of Wight. We will not affront this nominal duplicate by calling it Little Yarmouth, because, perhaps, it is the elder of the two. It may have existed as a group of prehistoric habitations, erected by cave-bear-hunting and aurochs-eating man, before Wight was scooped out by the sea from England, and before England, who now rules the waves, was isolated by those waves from the jealous continent of Europe, just fourteen thousand years ago, as Adhemar tells us.

The other, Great Yarmouth, if you please, Magna Jernemutha, logically, rationally, and royally so named in the reign of Edward the First, from standing at the mouth of the river Yare, on a spot where Norfolk smiles at her neighbour Suffolk basking in the sunshine just over the way, is really the pearl of East Anglia, though only quite recently cast on shore by the currents of the German Ocean.

The exact date when the site of the town first emerged from the sea is not known,

or at least not recorded, possibly because nobody was there to witness and record its emersion. The uprising, too, occasioned by accumulations of shingle and sand, was probably gradual, occupying a period of years, and not sudden, in a few days or hours, like the upheaval of certain volcanic localities and islands. Fuller, a fisherman, enjoys the renown of having been the first to haul his boat ashore and pitch his tent on the new-made terra-firma; and some rising ground, in the north part of the town, is thence called Fuller's Hill, though in truth there is very little of the hill about it. But Domesday Book (1081-1086) makes the earliest authentic mention of the town, denominating it Terra Regis, or King's Land, as if it were one of those waifs and strays which fell, as a matter of right, to royalty.

At any rate, Great Yarmouth is not prehistoric, nor is its origin lost in the night of ages. So much the better. It saves a vast amount of antiquarian quarrelling. Sufficient for us is it, that Fuller's adventurous example was followed by other fishermen, who, finding the long sandbank firm and healthy, took to themselves wives, increased and multiplied, discovered the annual immigration of herring from the neighbouring depths of the German Ocean (not from the North Sea, as Pennant taught) to the shallower water along the coast, about the Feast of St. Michael, first salted and then smoked their catch, and, firmly believing that there are as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it, established a permanent sale of their wares, and thereby grew healthy, wealthy, and wise, not so much by early rising as by toiling all night and all day too, as long as there was fish for their nets to haul on board. Evolution, now accepted as a law of nature, could not fail to improve smoked herring into bloaters. Of both these valued eatables there are imitations in sundry other maritime towns and countries; but, be it known to grateful peoples throughout the world, Great Yarmouth is the fountain and origin, the undoubted parent, the alma mater, of red herring and their natural outcome, bloaters. Red sprats, or bloater sprats, are only a plagiarism from the bloaters of Yarmouth, which furnished the original idea.

Yarmouth has scarcely had adequate justice done to it, certainly not in print, recently. Even its material creature comforts are imperfectly published to the world. Thousands who shout approval of

the bloaters, never mention, because they have never knowingly tasted, the shrimps. And yet those superlative red shrimps, which once rarely travelled farther, by cart or coach, than Norwich, are now distributed and dispersed anonymously by rail, north, south, and west. Eastwards, that is to say in the sea, they constitute the holiday fare of turbot, sole, and other dainty fish.

How their presence in the Yarmouth Roads was accidentally discovered, nearly a century ago, is a curious fact not generally known. Three species of shrimp are eaten in Great Britain: the prawn, the red shrimp, and the common brown, or flat-nosed shrimp. The second, less common than the third, is preferred to it by ladies, invalids, and persons of delicate appetite. It is caught in deeper water, and farther out to sea. Both the red, or rather pink, and the brown species are caught at Great Yarmouth, but in very different localities. The brown kind is taken alongshore, at ebb tide, in the harbour, and in the inland waters, and is more easily obtainable, and for a much longer period of the year. The present mode and locality of the red shrimp fishery was a lucky hit made by some boats that were employed in recovering lost anchors by a process which is called "sweeping." Two boats, at a certain distance from each other, proceed up and down the roads, having a loose rope suspended between them, at the middle of which is fastened a large fish-basket, or "swill," partly laden with stones to sink it. By these means the place of the anchor at the bottom of the sea is ascertained, and it is then raised and restored to society. But, in particular states of the tide, it was found that the swill, when brought to the surface, was filled with red shrimps. The men took the hint, kept their own counsel, got nets made, and, for a time, had the first gathering of the harvest, soon to be shared with others. Oddly enough, along the Isle of Thanet, it is the brown shrimp which is preferred.

There is no need now to send to Murray-shire for Findhorn, vulgo Finnan, haddock, which George the Fourth introduced to the south, since they are so admirably prepared in Yarmouth as to deceive the very elect of connoisseurs. Whoever doubts it, has only to apply to Chapman, fish-merchant, Middlegate Street.

In short, without pretending to kipper salmon, because it has none, Great Yarmouth perfectly cures any fish caught off the coast that is curable. Not having

salmon to kipper, it kippers herring. Only try them. And this is the perfection of art—to turn native produce to the very best account. Yarmouth, in respect to fish, is what, in the South of France, Cette is in respect to wines, where excellent port, and delicious Madeira, are produced from native grapes, with, perhaps, a little help from Spain. "I can't procure such Madeira as this," said a very particular friend while enjoying a bottle of first-rate Cette. "How do you manage to get it? There is none to be had from Madeira itself." Of course he was left in the ignorance which is bliss. Yarmouth Finnan haddocks merit equal praise, being, if possible, an improvement on their prototypes.

Yarmouth townfolk are justified in singing, "Home, Sweet Home! There's no place like Home!" There really is no town, or borough, or village, that I know of, like it. The nearest approach to its ground-plan is the Palace of the Escorial, in Spain. Where else will you find a town cut up into sections and slices by the system of narrow, parallel "Rows," which is one of the specialties and singularities of the place, which rows act as admirable ventilators of closely-packed tenements and warehouses? Where else will you find the picturesque little carts, as expressly adapted to pass through those rows as a ramrod or a bullet is to enter the barrel of a gun?

Even the minor surroundings of the borough are charming. Take a trot or a gallop on the South Denes—the open portion of the original sandbank still unbuilt on, between the town and the harbour's mouth. On one side you will behold the grand procession of shipping continually (with a fair wind) passing through the roads; on the other side you have the house and villa crowned heights of Gorleston. While thus inhaling the purest of breezes, you will be attended throughout your ride by three or four swallows gracefully circling round you, not through any affection they entertain for yourself, but for the sake of the insects which your horse's feet startle from their repose in the scanty grass. Or, in winter, you may see the black and grey crow sail in from Norway, not in the least tired, but as leisurely as if it had only flown a mile or two.

There are doctors who send their patients to breathe the resinous emanations which pervade the pine-groves of Arcachon or

Ravenna; but I have known invalids who, instead of travelling so far, delighted to inhale the healthy perfumes of pitch and tar given out by the South Town ropewalks and dockyards. Along the quay and the riverside, the very noises of Yarmouth are cheerful. During working hours, besides the sailors' musical cries, there is the continual knocking of the ship-builder's tools, not too loud, but sharp, brisk, and lively.

Yarmouth has always been rich in old ladies, who attain great longevity by a simple plan. The only season not conducive to their indefinite survival is early spring, during the prevalence of north-east winds, which arrive, icy and dry, from arctic regions. The fair elderlies then confine themselves to snug apartments which command a view of some sensitive weathercock. So long as its head remains between north and east, they keep as strictly inside the limits of their rooms as the self-imprisoned Pope does within the walls of the Vatican; but when the head of the vane veers persistently to west or south, they wisely judge that the time is come for outdoor airings.

As to modern literature concerning Great Yarmouth—well, I ought not to say much, but will still say something. In the seventh volume of the original *Household Words*, page one hundred and sixty-three, there appeared a paper headed, *The Norfolk Gridiron*, the title, at least, of which was wrongly attributed by local readers to our lamented chief, the late Charles Dickens. The error was most flattering to the actual writer, who still survives to send occasional scraps to *All the Year Round*. A serious, learned, and costly work—three pounds ten—in three large volumes, bound, is the late C. J. Palmer's *Perustration of Great Yarmouth*. The last contribution to its history is an elegant monograph—only two shillings and sixpence—*The Tolhouse of Great Yarmouth*, by Frederick Danby Palmer, a descendant of one of its oldest leading families, whose object it is to rescue from destructive dilapidation a most interesting and monumental building which dates from the thirteenth century. The effort, both literary and conservative, is highly honourable to its author. For when the site of an important town has been thrown up by the waves in quite recent historic times, it is clear that it can possess neither classic nor ancient British antiquities—no Roman amphitheatre, baths, or mosaic pavements.

But as all towns are proud of the architectural heirlooms bequeathed to them by their forefathers in early times, Yarmouth naturally cherishes a building which can claim at least six hundred birthdays. Such a treasured relic of the past is the Yarmouth Old Gaol, otherwise the Tolhouse.

But what is a tolhouse? Not merely a house for the taking of tolls, although tolls may have been taken there. In Scotland it would have been a tolbooth. "The ancient tolbooth of Edinburgh," wrote Sir W. Scott, "was built by the citizens in 1567, and destined for the accommodation of Parliament as well as the High Courts of Justice, and at the same time for the confinement of prisoners for debt and on criminal charges." Doubtless, Mr. Palmer argues, both the Edinburgh and the Yarmouth buildings were also used in early times for the collection of the town customs or tolls, but it may be urged that the true derivation of the word being from the Saxon "thol," i.e. "the liberty of buying and selling, or keeping a market," and this right having been conferred on the borough of Great Yarmouth by the charter of King John, the town then became a market town, and its town house was thereupon known as the "Tolhouse," a name which has been retained by it to the present day.

Our tolhouse, certainly, has combined the varied functions of prætorium, audience-chamber, court of justice, assembly-room, county-court, mart, and prison. Here, too, the corporation rents were made payable. The building itself, originally entirely detached from the adjoining houses, occupies the space between the rows Numbers One Hundred and Six and One Hundred and Eight in Middlegate Street. One of its greatest peculiarities is that the principal entrance is by an open external staircase, which leads from the street up to the first floor, where is situated the principal apartment or hall of the building. This staircase leads up to an open porch, in which a two-light, cinquefoiled window, or arcade—for it is open, and has never been glazed—commands a capital view of the street; and it appears especially designed for the purpose of addressing an assembly gathered below, such as the reading of proclamations, or, perhaps, the ordering of turbulent sailors to go home quietly to bed.

Entering the hall, the visitor is in the apartment known as the "Heighning Chamber." To "heighen," pronounced

"hay-en" in Norfolk dialect, is to heighten, raise, or advance the cost of an article; and in this chamber, the corporation at one time claimed the right to enhance the price of all herrings landed at the port. The entire building was not unfrequently called the "Host House," in consequence of the hosts of foreign fishermen who resorted to it at the time of the "Free Fair," since degenerated into the sale, on the beach, of gingerbread and dried fish, by foreign boats drawn on shore. This hall was used for all purposes of state—for Yarmouth men could do things grandly—such as the reception of the Barons of the Cinque Ports, and at the same time for the administration of justice. It once contained an old dais which has disappeared, but its position is marked by a chair of state, formerly the mayor's seat in St. Nicholas Church.

The more ancient part of the structure, used as a place for the punishment of criminals, is appropriately known as "the Hold," and into this dungeon all culprits were formerly thrust without distinction. It is an underground chamber, twenty feet long by twelve wide, having a height of sixteen feet, doubtless not much altered or improved since, as Manship records, "It pleased King Henry the Third to grant to us (in 1261) a gaol for prisoners and malefactors, according to the law of this land, to be imprisoned, and which ever since has been continued, and is commonly called by the name of the Tolhouse."

In this famous hold, iron rings were fixed to a great beam of wood crossing the floor, to which, in more rigorous times, prisoners were indiscriminately chained. It is poorly lighted and as badly ventilated; but possibly it was originally somewhat better in this respect, by reason of an open arch under the entrance porch, now closed, which communicated with the street. It is intended to reopen this—let us hope not for the benefit of any expected prisoners. The gaoler was a trifle better off, though his apartments are also on the ground floor. The massive nature of the doors, and other precautions for safety in this part of the building, are very remarkable and suggestive.

If these old prison walls had tongues, as other prison walls have ears, what strange, almost incredible stories they would tell us! Mr. Palmer, by careful listening, has caught a little of what they have to relate. Thus we learn that, at the Yar-

mouth Sessions in 1295, John Chapman and William Reymer, for stealing a super tunic of the value of two shillings, a pair of "paternosters," a razor, and other goods; Catherine Herre, for stealing cloth; Walter Helmes, for stealing a chest from a ship; John de Waterbeche, for stealing a pair of shoes; and five other persons, for similar petty thefts, were all condemned to death and hanged.

The severity of their punishment for such small offences would naturally, one would think, suggest to other intending malefactors that they might as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb—for a great crime as for a little one. Better luck, in 1507, had Emma Barefoot, a prisoner in gaol on a conviction for felony, who, "for defeaute of good and sure keyping, out of prison escaped and advoided," and the bailiffs had to obtain a discharge from the king for their negligence. But the severity of the penal laws was still maintained. At the sessions held in 1552, Richard Ramsey, of Blackeney, mariner, was convicted of stealing "a peyr of chenys of iron and an iron hoop," the goods of Thomas Betts, valued at five shillings, and being found guilty, and having "no goods nor chattels, lands, nor tenements," he was condemned to be hanged, and was hanged accordingly.

Political struggles could not occur in the realm without sending their contingent of prisoners to the Tolhouse den. Henry Coke, a royalist, who had been member for Dunwich in the Long Parliament, and one of the first expelled the House, was imprisoned there for "malignancy" in not acknowledging the power of Parliament even by paying taxes or petitioning for his release. The release, however, was obtained by the solicitations of his wife. In 1656, when there was a report of a Royalist rising, and that Coke had secreted arms, a party of horsemen from Yarmouth searched his house, took him into custody, and again lodged him in Yarmouth gaol, where, being then "old, very fat, and unwieldy," he was detained for two days, during which "he would neither pay for any meat or drink, nor give the soldiers one penny for guarding him." The governor then released him, and without waiting for his own coach and horses, he hired a Yarmouth cart, in which he drove to Sir Nicholas Bacon's house at Gillingham. One of his sons, in gaol with him, being only nineteen years of age, and "raw, and of little experience in martial or any other affairs," confessed,



after having "burning matches put between his fingers," and was sent to London.

For other details, past and present, respecting this curious old tolhouse, the reader is referred to Mr. Palmer's interesting history. While the dilapidated edifice is awaiting the funds needful for its complete restoration, we may naturally ask ourselves, What would not some of the new cities in the Western States of North America give—supposing that it were for sale—for such an antique gem, to ornament one of their brand-new squares, where it would be treasured as highly as the *Maison Carrée* at Nismes, and revered almost as deeply as the *Santa Casa* at Loretto? But with their present high customs' tariffs on works of art and vertu, the duty imposed upon it would surely prohibit its importation. The venerable tolhouse will remain where it is, no doubt, with a new lease of life bestowed on it by solid and judicious repairs.

## GERALD.

BY ELEANOR C. PRICE.

### CHAPTER XXXVII. BROUGHT HOME.

HUGH never knew, and could never be sure in his own mind, whether Theo had known that her baby was dead when he first arrived at the house. He was inclined to think so; but he had no time to puzzle himself about that till long afterwards. It seemed as if he had come to Africa only to have his heart wrung by saying good-bye to his cousin; for after the baby had been taken away from her, and Gerald, and Hugh, and Bob Stirling had followed him to his grave in the desolate cemetery—a place that Hugh could never think of without an involuntary shudder—Theo lay for days so ill with fever that she knew none of them, and the doctor told them that he did not think she could recover. But she did recover—very slowly, very sadly, as if it was a terrible weariness to be dragged back into life again. As soon as it was possible to move her, Gerald took her away to the river, leaving his Kimberley affairs in the hands of Bob Stirling and Hugh. The claim was sold—that miserable claim, to which one life had already been sacrificed—and the house, and the furniture, and the horses; for the doctor said that Mrs. Fane must go home to England, and Gerald was only too glad, now, to escape from that terrible place and that terrible country. Africa had, indeed, shown him

now her dark, her awful side. The freedom and grandeur of her life seemed now to be mere shadows; or the freedom was unlimited despair, and the grandeur was that of an iron, crushing fate.

At this time one of Theo's wishes was realised: Gerald and Hugh began to like each other. Hugh's quiet considerateness had a soothing effect on Gerald, who was half wild, poor fellow, with grief and anxiety. Hugh was very sorry for him, when he looked round at Kimberley and its inhabitants, and remembered how the young man had banished himself here, feeling that he must leave England for no fault of his own. There must be something in him, Hugh concluded, having the fairest mind in the world. Theo, after all, would hardly have loved a worthless fellow with all the strength of her noble nature, as she had loved Gerald, even to following him here. Hugh thought that if he had himself realised the tenth part of what it meant, going out to Africa, he would have moved heaven and earth to stop Theo's going. But as it was, he was glad to be able to assure himself that her devotion had not been quite wasted; she had probably saved this fellow from utter shipwreck; for though there was a certain boyish clearness of character about Gerald which Hugh liked and appreciated as he came to know him better, he saw that his mind was not that of a very strong man. His passionate love and anxiety for Theo, mixed, as it seemed, with something like remorse; his dread and agony at any hint of danger, made Hugh moralise a little, wondering what would have happened to Gerald if she had never belonged to him at all.

When Kimberley was done with at last, and she was just well enough to travel, they drove down in a cart of their own to the railway. The weather was tremendously hot; the parched plains glowed red and yellow under the glowing sky; it was impossible to travel in the heat of the day, and Hugh was sometimes afraid that they had moved Theo too soon. But she did not think so herself, and did not seem to feel the heat much. She noticed nothing by the way, and spoke very little. She did not sleep much, but lay back in a sort of indifferent dream, very sad, with half-closed eyes, hardly aware of anyone but Gerald.

When he touched her hand she would look up into his face and smile—Hugh thought he would rather have seen tears than such a smile. Since the day little Gerald died she had never once spoken of

him, never shown by any sign that she missed him. Hugh almost feared sometimes that she had lost her memory; but Combe did not think so.

At Cape Town she stayed a few days with Mrs. Forester, to rest after her journey; and with her she was just the same—gentle, sad, silent, receiving all her friend's tender care with a sort of peaceful indifference, only restless when Gerald was away.

Mrs. Forester, who could have given her such perfect sympathy, saw that it was no use offering it, but she talked to Hugh and comforted him, and told him that time and England would be the only cure.

Theo awoke at last from her long dream, and found herself in her grandmother's drawing-room one cold, foggy afternoon in early spring. She was on the sofa, covered with a fur rug. Lady Redcliff was in her own old chair opposite. Just now, Gerald and Ada had been in the room; Ada sitting on a footstool by Theo, silent, and holding her hand; Gerald answering all manner of questions which Lady Redcliff was asking him about Africa. Lady Redcliff seemed to like Gerald very much; she watched him with twinkling eyes, and said nothing ill-natured. When he and Ada had gone out together, she sat smiling oddly to herself for a minute or two. At last she said in a sharp little voice:

"Thank you, Theo; I'm very much obliged to you, my dear."

"What for, grandmamma?" said Theo.

"Can't I make a remark?" said Lady Redcliff. "Don't catechise—don't be priggish, like your excellent cousin. Well, so you are quite strong now, are you?"

"Oh yes," said Theo wearily. "The cold agrees with me. I wish I had always been cold." And she shivered as she spoke.

"You always used to be—an icicle, except when you were in a rage," said her grandmother. "It was a bad business going out to that murderous climate—about the worst piece of mischief I ever did in my life. Don't you think so?"

"No; I don't know—"

"You and Gerald are two of the silliest fools I ever met," said Lady Redcliff. "You know it was all my fault, and yet you are as friendly to me as if I was the dearest and kindest relation in the world."

"So you are," said Theo quietly. "Who else would have thought of sending for us home? Grandmamma," she said, and she opened her eyes, and a strange, beautiful light seemed to shine in her face, "you

love me better than anybody in the world, and I love you."

"What nonsense you talk!" said Lady Redcliff, giving her a quick glance, and looking down. "Why, Theo—after all you have suffered—and you can't imagine that I cared about it all."

"I don't imagine—I know," said Theo. "And I am very glad that he and I were out there together. We belong to each other—more than anyone here can understand. If there are depths out there, the heights are just as wonderful. There is only one thing—if I could have shown you my baby—"

Lady Redcliff looked at her sharply; she suspected rightly that this was the first time Theo had mentioned her baby.

"Ah, poor little fellow!" she said, in a strange, soft voice. "And yet, do you know, my dear, I have been capable of wishing that at least one or two of my children had died when they were babies. I don't enter into any doctrines or imaginations about them—that you understand; but your boy, every day he lives, he belongs to you less. If you lose him very soon, you lose him at any rate before he has loved any one but you."

It was an odd sort of consolation; and, perhaps, Theo did not quite hear it or take it in; but she began to tell her grandmother all about the baby, crying softly now and then.

Lady Redcliff listened with wonderful patience and kindness, presently moving to a chair by Theo's side, and laying her cold little wrinkled hand on her forehead.

"Now look here, child," she said presently, when Theo was calmer, "you have had enough trial and trouble for the years you have lived, it seems to me. When I told you just now that I was very much obliged to you, had you the faintest idea what I meant?"

"You had been talking to Gerald, and I thought you might mean that you were obliged to me for him," said Theo with a happy smile, looking up into the old face beside her.

"That is exactly what I did mean," said Lady Redcliff, nodding. "And now I want to know what you are going to do with that poor young man in future? Not set him to some stupefying work again, I hope?"

"He must find something to do; we have spent all our money."

"Yes; you seem to have behaved like a

wonderful pair of idiots. But I warned you long ago that he couldn't work. He was not born to make money, but to spend it. I told you so before, and you knew quite well I was right. Now, do you see what I am driving at?"

"Not quite," said Theo.

"Then you are blind. You and he are my children. He must do nothing, and you must have this house for your home. Ah yes, I know you used to be frightfully bored here, but it won't be so bad, perhaps, now that you have him. You needn't look disgusted. I'll make him a good allowance."

"But, grandmamma—thank you so much—but he could not!" exclaimed Theo, quite roused by this startling proposal.

"Why not? I have nothing to do with the Norths," said Lady Redcliff rather angrily, bringing a sudden flush of colour into Theo's face.

"He could not," she repeated.

"He can, and he shall," said Lady Redcliff.

"He won't, grandmamma."

"He will. I know him better than you do. You were always the blindest person in the world; you always thought, if you liked people, that they must want to do what they ought. I know better, my dear. I wonder by this time you have not picked up more knowledge of men. Mr. Gerald will be very glad to be lazy, and to live on somebody else for the rest of his life."

Theo coloured almost angrily; but then she could not help smiling.

"On the contrary," she said, "Gerald likes work, and if you ask him he will tell you so."

"I dare say he will; but I sha'n't believe him. You will see; I shall settle it all. He is not so downright ungracious and ungrateful as you."

"I'm sorry——"

"Don't be a humbug."

"But he is quite as independent as I am."

There is no knowing how long this dispute might have gone on, or how angry Lady Redcliff would have become with Theo's obstinacy. Probably they would have argued till Gerald came in to answer for himself. But in the midst the butler came to ask if Mrs. Goodall could see Mrs. Fane.

"Mrs. Goodall! What a bore! Do you want to see that fat creature?" said Lady Redcliff.

"Yes, please," said Theo meekly.

"I hope she has not brought a dozen babies. Are there any babies, Finn?"

Finn gravely answered that he thought there was one in the carriage.

"Let it stay there. What a fool the woman is!" said Lady Redcliff, half aside.

Helen came in, fair, and placid, and peaceful. She was dreadfully afraid of Lady Redcliff, but she did not show it in the least, except by watching her a little anxiously after her first greeting with Theo. She sat and asked little questions, and answered Theo's questions, and looked at her with soft, sympathising eyes. Even in this dark room it was easy to see what a change there was in Theo. Helen was very sorry, but she could say nothing now—certainly not while this old dragon, as she mentally called Lady Redcliff, was in the room.

"Well, Theo," she said presently, "has Gerald made any plans yet?"

"For the future? No," said Theo, glancing across at her grandmother, who was amusing herself by staring at Helen.

The rich potter's wife was a soft, pretty sight in her furs and velvets; her fair, bright hair, her delicate skin, her sleepy eyes, with their long lashes, were unchanged from the girlish days when Lady Redcliff had seen her before. It was a sort of beauty that Lady Redcliff despised; all milk and sugar, as she described it. She looked from one young woman to the other, and wondered if any one on earth could admire Mrs. Goodall more than Mrs. Fane. Theo looked years older than Helen now; hardship, and illness, and grief had left a mark never to be effaced—no, not by a whole lifetime of idleness and ease. No one could ever look into Theo's face now without seeing that she had suffered. Her girl-beauty was gone; but there were two or three people who thought that she was more beautiful than ever.

"You are a contrast, you two," said Lady Redcliff suddenly.

"Poor Theo! no wonder," said Mrs. Goodall softly and pityingly; there was at least no doubt in her mind that the advantage was on her side.

She took Theo's hand and held it caressingly, while Theo lay and smiled at her.

"When people are weak, they don't like to be pulled about," said Lady Redcliff impatiently; but Helen did not take this remark to herself at all.

"I hear you have brought a child with you," said Lady Redcliff; "he will catch cold, or measles, or something, if you keep him waiting long in a cab."

"Oh, thank you very much; he is well wrapped up, and nurse will take good care of him," said Helen innocently; she thought Lady Redcliff was going to ask the baby in. "You wouldn't like to see him, Theo?" she suggested, turning to her cousin.

"I think, perhaps—" Theo began.

"I won't have it," said Lady Redcliff; "quite enough excitement for her to see you, without being introduced to a strange child; though no doubt he is immensely worth seeing."

"As to that," said Helen, smiling good-humouredly, "I dare say he would seem to you much the same as other babies."

"No; I'm quite aware that there never was such a child before. He is the image of his father, isn't he? How is his father?"

"Very well, thank you; he is in London, but I thought he had better not come with me to-day."

"What a horrid disappointment!" said Lady Redcliff; "I should have been charmed to see him. I respect Mr. Goodall; he is something unique in my experience."

Here even Helen's placid mind began to suspect impertinence, and she turned away to Theo with a faint extra shade of colour in her cheeks. But a little feeling of defiance made her go on talking about John. She was an excellent wife; she liked John much better now than when she married him, and though she was not quite blind to his defects, she thought him in most things very superior to other men.

"Do you know, Theo," she said, "John has been wondering very much what Gerald means to do. He has made no plans, then?"

"Other people may have made plans for him, perhaps," remarked Lady Redcliff. "Tell Mr. Goodall so, with my compliments, if he thinks of teaching him to make pots."

Helen gave Lady Redcliff a rather bored little smile; she thought this was only a rude joke, not worth noticing, and she went on talking to Theo, who lay looking with grave, tired eyes; it did not seem necessary, then, to explain what her grandmother meant.

"I don't know that I ought to say anything about it," said Helen; "perhaps I ought to leave it to John; but I should so much like to know what you think, Theo. Of course to me it seems a most delight-

ful idea, but you may think it very uninteresting."

"Don't mystify the poor thing; her brain won't stand much exhausting," said Lady Redcliff. "I'm curious, too, to know what Mr. Goodall has imagined, but I must warn you it is all of no use."

"Don't say that, grandmamma," said Theo, lifting up her head. "Tell me, Nell; John is very kind; what is it?"

"Well, dear," said Helen with a little hesitation, "you know the old house at Deerhurst, where Gerald used to live. I think I told you in a letter that John had bought it and the colliery. And it struck him the other day that if Gerald had nothing else to do, you might like to come and live there, and he could have his old post of manager, if he wouldn't despise it—till he gets something better. Of course it is a bad neighbourhood, but you know it already, and you and I would have each other. Of course I see lots of advantages, but then it is quite impossible for me not to look at it selfishly, don't you see, Theo?"

She stopped, looking at her cousin with real eagerness and anxiety, but Theo's eyes were fixed on Lady Redcliff, who had flung herself back in her chair and snatched up a newspaper.

"John is very kind," Theo repeated absently; then, after a moment's pause, she looked at Helen and smiled. "Thank you so much," she said; "Gerald must decide. Everybody is very kind to us. I must tell you, Nell, how good grandmamma has been."

"Don't be a fool or a hypocrite," said Lady Redcliff behind her newspaper.

At that moment, before Theo had time to say anything more, the door opened and Gerald came in. He looked bright and well, and he and Helen met as cordially as if they had been old friends.

"I have just seen Mr. Goodall," he said to her. "He has done me an immense kindness; he has given me work to do, and a house to live in. He is the best fellow I ever met."

Helen flushed with pleasure, and Theo could not help smiling as she looked at him; but for a moment neither of them spoke. The first voice heard was Lady Redcliff's, she herself being still hidden from sight by the Times.

"What a happy release for me!" said this old philosopher.

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